

USS Constitution to Host Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Story by USS Constitution Public Affairs

CHARLESTOWN, Mass. – USS Constitution will host their annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony aboard the ship, Dec. 4.

The event is free and open to the public in celebration of the upcoming holidays.

Constitution's crew will begin accepting guests on board at 3:30 p.m. Please allow additional time for security screening; guests ages 18 and over must present a valid federal or state-issued photo ID to embark the ship. Examples include: driver's license, passport, etc. Additionally, all bags will be visually inspected at the ship's security entrance.

Following evening colors at 4:12 p.m. and the firing of Constitution's starboard-side saluting battery, the tree lighting ceremony will commence. Lastly, a surprise guest dressed in red is scheduled to visit the children in attendance.

Students from local elementary schools will also be welcomed to decorate the ship's tree Dec. 2 at 9:30 a.m.

Currently, visitors of the USS Constitution Museum can create an ornament for the ship's tree at the museum. Creating an ornament is free, and museum staff will place all collected ornaments on the ship's tree the day of the ceremony; however, after Dec. 4 until Christmas Eve, visitors who make an ornament at the museum can place it on the tree themselves.

Additionally, National Park Service rangers will be on hand Dec. 4 to discuss the history of the Charlestown Navy Yard and the 1805 Commandant's House. The Navy League and Marine Corps Reserve will accept toy donations for the Toys for Tots program, and the USO will promote Operation Care Package and Operation Little Elf.

Constitution is the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat. She defended the sea lanes against threat from 1797 to 1855, much like the mission of today's Navy. Constitution's mission today is to offer community outreach and education about the ship's history, as she welcomes more than 500,000 visitors per year.

For more information about Constitution, visit www.history.navy.mil/ussconstitution or www.facebook.com/ussconstitutionofficial.